

The Fifth Episcopal District African Methodist Episcopal Church



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Contents

Cover.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
State of the Country.....	4
State of the Church.....	7
Christian Stewardship.....	12
Christian Education.....	15
Clergy Family Organization.....	16
Evangelism.....	17
Health and Wellness.....	23
Lay Organization.....	25
Mental Health Ambassadors.....	27
Missions, Circuits, and Stations.....	30
Public Relations.....	33
Women In Ministry.....	35
Church School.....	40
YPD.....	42
Classification of Pastors.....	44
Classification of Churches/Pastors.....	46

172nd SESSION OF THE MISSOURI ANNUAL CONFERENCE
LITERARY REPORT ON THE
STATE OF THE COUNTRY

Thursday, September 24, 2026

To: The Right Rev. Francine A. Brookins, Esq. ~ Presiding Bishop
Rev. Miriam J. Burnett, MD, MPH ~ Episcopal Supervisor
Rev. Edmund E. Lowe, Sr., Presiding Elder ~ Gateway District
Rev. Beverly Stith ~ Host Pastor
St. John A.M.E. Church ~ Host Church
Delegates and Members of the Missouri Annual Conference

As we gather for the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference, our nation finds itself in a season of deep division, economic strain, and growing concern about the strength of our democratic and public institutions. Yet the Church has never been called merely to observe the times. We are called to discern them and to respond with moral courage, prophetic witness, and faithful action.

National Conditions

Democracy and voting rights remain urgent concerns as the nation approaches the November 3rd midterm elections. Public debate over voter access, election administration, legislative representation, and preserving civil rights continues nationwide. Recent Supreme Court decisions and ongoing legal challenges have raised consequential questions about voting rights, representation, citizenship, and the balance of governmental power. These developments remind us that decisions made in courts and legislatures can have lasting consequences for the rights and participation of ordinary citizens. The AME Church, born out of a struggle for dignity, freedom, and self-determination, cannot be silent when the full participation of our people is at stake. For African Americans, many of these concerns carry historical weight. Debates surrounding voting access, educational opportunity, economic inequality, health disparities, and the teaching of Black history are not abstract political questions. They touch communities whose struggle for full citizenship and equal protection has shaped this nation's history and the witness of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Immigration, civil rights, and human dignity remain central concerns. Federal policy changes and legal disputes surrounding asylum, deportation protections, citizenship, and the treatment of immigrants have created fear and instability for many families. At the same time, national debates about race, gender, education, health, and equal protection continue to affect the lives of our members and neighbors. The Church must remember that the biblical command to welcome the stranger and care for the vulnerable concerns real people—children, parents, workers, elders, and families in our communities.

Economic pressure continues to burden working families. Rising costs of housing, food, utilities, health care, transportation, and childcare have left many households vulnerable to financial

crisis. National policy decisions concerning trade, tariffs, public benefits, health care, and wages demonstrate how decisions made in Washington can quickly reach the kitchen tables of ordinary families. These pressures are not borne equally. Low-income families, seniors living on fixed incomes, people with disabilities, and communities already affected by historic economic inequities often have the least margin for absorbing increased costs.

Polarization and mistrust have weakened public life. Differences of race, party, religion, generation, and ideology are too often used to divide communities rather than solve problems. Trust in government, schools, media, health institutions, and even one another has been strained. The Church must not reflect the hostility of the moment. We are called to be a ministry of reconciliation - not reconciliation that avoids truth or ignores injustice, but reconciliation that holds firm convictions while refusing to demean or dehumanize others. These concerns may be debated in legislatures, courtrooms, classrooms, and newsrooms, but their consequences eventually arrive at the doors of our churches. They appear in families struggling to pay rent, seniors choosing between medicine and groceries, immigrants living in fear, young people questioning whether their voice matters, and neighbors who feel increasingly isolated from those who think differently. Social action, therefore, is not separate from ministry. It is one of the primary ways ministry meets people where life is actually happening.

Our Conference Response

Bishop Brookins's call for every local church in the Missouri Conference to appoint a Social Action Representative provides us with a timely opportunity to strengthen, connect, and coordinate this work across the Conference. This request is fully consistent with the historic witness of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The AME Church was born in protest of dehumanization and continues to understand Christian ministry as care for the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and environmental needs of all people. We also recognize that the Bishop's call builds upon work already taking place across the Missouri Conference. Many of our pastors, clergy, and congregations have faithfully engaged in ministries of social action: providing food and material assistance to persons in need; connecting families with community resources; serving youth, seniors, and persons facing crisis; encouraging voter education and voter registration; and convening town halls or community forums where public concerns may be discussed. Our churches have already demonstrated that they understand the assignment: to put faith into action and make the love of Christ visible in the life of the community. The Social Action Representative does not create this ministry; the representative helps connect, coordinate, strengthen, and tell the story of work already taking place. This role can help us share best practices, identify unmet needs, strengthen partnerships, and ensure that no church stands alone in responding to the needs of God's people.

Initial Responsibilities

As this ministry develops, initial areas of service may include:

- Serve as liaison between the local church, Presiding Elder District, and Conference social-action leadership.

- Identify pressing community needs and maintain a current list of trusted resources for food, housing, employment, health, mental-health support, disability services, and legal-aid referrals.
- Encourage nonpartisan voter registration, voter education, and civic participation. Churches may educate voters and host fair candidate forums, but they may not endorse candidates or political parties.
- Coordinate or promote service projects, educational forums, listening sessions, and partnerships with community organizations.
- Share a brief report of needs observed, ministries undertaken, community partnerships, and assistance needed.
- Help communicate urgent community concerns, advocacy opportunities, and available resources to the congregation.

Charge to the Conference

Let us receive Bishop Brookins's request not as another administrative assignment, but as an invitation to organize our compassion. Let every local church identify a Social Action Representative and report on the ministries already underway, the needs being observed, and the support required. The Missouri Conference can demonstrate that the AME Church continues to join prayer with service, proclamation with justice, and faith with faithful action. In a divided country, may we be known as a people who pray, vote, serve, teach, advocate, and love - building beloved community in the name of Jesus Christ.

Respectfully submitted: Reverends Anthony McPherson, Beverly Stith, Michael Scott, Debbie Thornton. Delegates: Sis. Brenda Simpson (St. James-STL AMEC), and Sis. Amanda Schanz (Buren Chapel AMEC)

**172nd SESSION OF THE MISSOURI ANNUAL CONFERENCE
LITERARY REPORT ON THE
STATE OF THE CHURCH**

Thursday, September 24, 2026

To: The Right Rev. Francine A. Brookins, Esq. ~ Presiding Bishop
Rev. Miriam J. Burnett, MD, MPH ~ Episcopal Supervisor
Rev. Edmund E. Lowe, Sr., Presiding Elder ~ Gateway District
Rev. Beverly Stith ~ Host Pastor
St. John A.M.E. Church ~ Host Church
Delegates and Members of the Missouri Annual Conference

From Reflection to Faithful Practice: Strengthening Our Shared Witness

The Church of Jesus Christ has always lived between promise and responsibility. We stand upon the assurance of our Lord: *“I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18, KJV)*. This promise does not remove the Church from the realities of its time. Rather, it calls the Church to meet every season with faith, wisdom, courage, and disciplined obedience.

The Missouri Annual Conference gathers for its 172nd Session with both gratitude and honest reflection. Across our Conference, pastors, laypersons, evangelists, missionaries, stewards, trustees, musicians, Christian educators, class leaders, young people, and congregations continue to worship, preach the Gospel, provide pastoral care, feed the hungry, comfort the grieving, support families, and bear witness to the liberating love of Jesus Christ. Often this ministry is carried out under demanding circumstances and with limited resources. Yet these faithful efforts testify that the spirit of African Methodism remains alive in Missouri. Gratitude does not prevent us from telling the truth about the work that remains.

At the 171st Session, this report named realities confronting the contemporary Church: declining participation, generational and cultural disconnection, financial strain, mental-health needs, technology gaps, polarization, and threats directed toward Black churches and communities. Those concerns remain. At this 172nd Session, however, the question is not only whether we can name them, but whether we will turn awareness into sustained, shared, and faithful practice. The Church is strengthened when concern becomes commitment, recommendations become ministry, and local faithfulness is connected, supported, and shared throughout the Missouri Conference.

The State of the Church

The State of the Church cannot be measured only by membership rolls, attendance, offerings, or the condition of our buildings. These measures matter and require responsible stewardship. Yet the Church’s spiritual condition is also revealed in the depth of discipleship, the health of its leaders, the welcome extended to younger generations, the care offered to persons in crisis, the strength of its witness for justice, and the extent to which congregations remain places of belonging, healing, hope, and service.

We have reason for hope. Faithful ministry occurs whenever a congregation welcomes a neighbor in need, a pastor or layperson cares for the sick and grieving, a young person is invited to lead, our tradition is taught with integrity, or the Gospel is proclaimed as good news to those on the margins. At the same time, many congregations face aging memberships, reduced participation, financial limitations, property needs, and the challenge of engaging children, youth, and young adults while preserving the spiritual depth and identity of African Methodism. We must also confront isolation. Attendance alone does not ensure belonging; people need relationships in which they are known, supported, formed, and needed.

Patterns of participation have changed. Digital worship and communication remain vital for people limited by health, work, caregiving responsibilities, distance, or other circumstances. Yet technology must extend—not replace—relationships, pastoral care, discipleship, and mutual responsibility. We must also transmit a living faith across generations. Our task is more than attracting younger people to church; it is forming disciples who know the Gospel, understand the witness of African Methodism, and can live that faith faithfully in changing communities and circumstances.

Pastors and leaders carry the expectations of ministry alongside grief, stress, family responsibilities, and economic uncertainty. A healthy Church cannot be sustained indefinitely by unhealthy or exhausted leaders. Caring for clergy and lay leadership is therefore not separate from strengthening the Church; it is part of strengthening the Church. Some churches have developed strong technology and communications practices, while others need basic training, equipment, and encouragement to remain visible and accessible in a digital age. These realities should not lead us to despair. They should lead us to prayerful action. African Methodism was built through connection, sacrifice, education, evangelism, mutual aid, and prophetic witness. Our strength has never rested solely in isolated congregations, but in churches joined in doctrine, discipline, worship, service, mutual care, and mission.

Faithful stewardship also requires us to examine how our structures serve our mission. Our buildings, traditions, organizations, offices, and connectional structures are gifts that have sustained generations of African Methodists and should not be dismissed casually. Yet every generation must ask: Are our structures continuing to serve our mission, or are we sometimes investing so much energy in maintaining what we have that we struggle to embrace the opportunities God is giving us to become what this moment requires? Faithful stewardship may sometimes mean preserving what continues to bear fruit, strengthening what needs support, adapting what can serve differently, and having the courage to release what no longer advances the mission.

From Concern to Coordination

Faithful ministry is already taking place across the Missouri Conference. One congregation may be strengthening food ministry, another cultivating a mental-health partnership, another nurturing young musicians and worship leaders, another using digital ministry effectively, and another

building relationships with schools, civic organizations, or neighborhood partners. These ministries should not remain isolated examples known only within one congregation. The Missouri Conference can become a community of mutual learning. Rather than asking every church to solve every challenge alone, we can identify faithful practices, share them, and adapt them to local circumstances. This is not a call for uniformity. Congregations differ in setting, capacity, history, and mission field. It is a call for intentional connection and a willingness to learn from the gifts God has already placed among us.

Connection also calls us to respond to the vision being cast among us. Bishop Brookins and Supervisor Burnett have invited the Missouri Conference toward new possibilities for ministry, including the Mission Impossible initiative and the developing partnership with the American Red Cross. These opportunities can strengthen ministry, expand service, and deepen community engagement. Our responsibility is to move them from Conference vision to local practice—from ideas presented to us to ministries embraced, adapted, and lived through us.

Much of what we need for the Church's future may already be in our DNA. African Methodism carries a rich tradition of connection, evangelism, discipleship, class relationships, Christian education, mutual aid, missionary service, lay leadership, and prophetic witness. Becoming does not always mean becoming something else; sometimes it means growing more fully into who God has already called us to be.

Connectionalism moves in both directions. Local congregations possess gifts, ministries, and experiences that can strengthen the wider Conference, while Conference leadership can cultivate partnerships, resources, and opportunities that strengthen local ministry. When these gifts meet, connection becomes more than structure; it becomes a means of equipping and encouraging one another for mission. Strengthening the Church also requires us to recognize and cultivate the range of ministry callings God has placed among us. Ordained pastoral ministry is essential to the life of African Methodism, but it is not the only expression of Christian vocation.

Evangelists, missionaries, Christian educators, class leaders, lay leaders, and others possess gifts that can extend the Church's ministry into places and relationships our pastors cannot reach alone. Particularly as congregations confront isolation, changing patterns of participation, and the need for renewed evangelism and discipleship, we should consider how these ministries can be more intentionally identified, equipped, supported, and deployed. We should also help persons discerning a call to ministry understand the breadth of faithful ministry available within the Church. Not every call must take the same form; faithful discernment helps persons discover where their gifts, calling, preparation, and the needs of the Church meet.

Invitations to Faithful Practice

1. Cultivate Belonging and Connection

Congregations should examine not only who attends, but who belongs: Who is known? Who is missing? Who may be carrying life alone? Do our ministries create relationships beyond the worship hour? Our Methodist tradition offers resources for this work through class relationships,

mutual accountability, visitation, Christian formation, and care. Connection was never intended to be merely organizational; it is relational. People need more than a place to attend. They need a community where they are known, formed, needed, and sent.

2. Strengthen Evangelism, Discipleship, and Ministry Formation

Every congregation should consider how it reaches beyond its present membership and helps persons grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Evangelism is more than increasing membership rolls, but the Church cannot neglect Christ's call to make disciples. We should ask: Who in our community are we not reaching? What barriers make participation difficult? How are people invited into relationship, discipleship, service, and the discovery of their gifts and calling? Evangelists, missionaries, Christian educators, class leaders, and lay leaders can be vital partners in this work. The goal is a living cycle in which people encounter Christ, find community, grow in faith, discover their gifts, serve in ministry, and help reach others.

3. Practice Intentional Intergenerational Ministry

The future of the Church will not be secured by asking younger people merely to attend what has already been planned. Children, youth, and young adults must be invited into meaningful participation, real leadership, and serious discipleship.

Intergenerational ministry also requires listening. We must hear younger generations' questions about faith, institutions, justice, belonging, authenticity, and the Church itself. Such questions are not necessarily a rejection of faith; they may invite us to examine whether our practices communicate the Gospel as clearly as we believe they do.

At the same time, we must honor and pass forward the wisdom, testimony, history, and spiritual discipline of our elders. The Church is strongest when it rejects the false choice between tradition and transformation. We need the grounding of our heritage and the fresh vision of those who will carry the Church forward.

4. Share What Is Working

Congregations are encouraged to share ministries, partnerships, and practices that can benefit others across the Conference. Whether the work involves discipleship, evangelism, youth and young-adult engagement, stewardship, Christian education, community outreach, mental-health support, music ministry, or digital communication, its lessons should be made available to the wider Church. The purpose is not comparison, but connection. Shared learning can reduce unnecessary duplication, reveal potential partnerships, and help congregations adapt effective practices to their own settings.

5. Connect Vision to Faithful Action

Conference agencies, auxiliaries, and local congregations are encouraged to identify one priority area and one practical action for the coming year. That action may arise from a local need, a ministry already showing promise, or an opportunity offered through Episcopal leadership and connectional partnerships. The goal is not to create more programs. It is to connect available opportunities with community needs, identify the gifts and persons already among us, and move from invitation to implementation. Brief, honest reflection should accompany the work: What

did we attempt? What did we learn? What support is still needed? Whenever possible, this reflection should be incorporated into existing reporting structures rather than creating another administrative requirement. Shared accountability is not punishment; it is faithful care for the work God has entrusted to us.

A Call to Hopeful Accountability

The State of the Church in 2026 is neither a verdict of failure nor an excuse for complacency. It is a call to faithful accountability: to give thanks for what God is already doing, strengthen what bears fruit, learn from one another, and act together where our shared witness requires it.

The Missouri Annual Conference need not solve every challenge in a single year. We can, however, take seriously the connectional gifts God has given us. We can cultivate belonging, strengthen evangelism and discipleship, equip the full range of ministry callings, listen across generations, share wisdom and resources, care for leaders, and engage the initiatives and partnerships before us. Our task is not merely to preserve the Church we inherited, but to faithfully steward the Gospel and the Church we will hand to those who come after us.

The Church has endured because God is faithful. The Black Church has endured because our ancestors refused to surrender faith, dignity, communal responsibility, or hope. From Richard Allen's vision to the present day, African Methodism has understood that Christian faith must be lived in community and expressed through mission. Our confidence rests not in institutional survival or in our ability to preserve everything we have known, but in Jesus Christ, who remains Lord of the Church and continues to call us into faithful witness.

Therefore, let us not be discouraged by what remains unfinished. Let us be encouraged by the grace that has brought us this far and by the work God still places in our hands. May the Missouri Annual Conference move from reflection to faithful practice, from concern to coordinated ministry, and from isolated effort to a stronger shared witness.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." — Galatians 6:9 (KJV)

Respectfully submitted: Reverends Anthony McPherson, Dr. David Parker, Sr., Zelldrick Preston, Jasmine Thompson, Dr. Priscilla Dowden-White; Delegates: Sis. JoAnne Hammock (Bethel, Paynesville), and Sis. Carol Carroll (St. Paul-STL)



African Methodist Episcopal Church 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference

September 24, 2026

To:

Bishop Francine A. Brookins Esq.	Presiding Prelate
Rev. Miriam Burnett, MD, MPH	Supervisor
Rev. Edmund E. Lowe, Sr.	Host Presiding Elder, Gateway District
Rev. Beverly Stith	Host Pastor
St. John on the Kingshighway	Host Church
Officers, Delegates, and Members of the 172 Session of the Missouri Conference	

What is Christian Stewardship? It is following the teaching, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The act of stewardship shows how much of a Christian you really are. According to the Doctrine and Discipline page 97 section C, *“they shall seek the needy and distressed in order to relieve and comfort them”*. In addition, page 886, paragraph two of the Discipline reads: The practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, influence, ability, and material possessions, based on the conviction that these are a trust from God, to be used in His service for the benefit of all humankind in grateful acknowledgement of Christ’s redeeming love. It is also the use of one’s time, treasure, talents, health, relationships, property and the gospel in a partnership with God.

Our mission is to bring relief and comfort to the best of our ability, using our God given gifts and talents. Galatians 6:10 says *“Therefore as we have opportunity let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of faith (not just AME)”*. Amen! When we serve

others, we are serving as God would have us serve, as well as serving Him. This mission took us outside the walls of our churches. For example, in 2025, a tornado hit the city of St. Louis, Missouri. That tragedy not only devastated the families that it directly impacted, but all of Missouri. There was much talk about what could, should, and would be done. While others were talking, the men and women of the Missouri Conference Gateway District, in partnership with the Disaster Team, went to work. The AME churches were fast-acting to ensure that the people were getting some of the aid and assistance they needed mentally, physically, and spiritually.

We, the Christian Stewardship Committee, continue to aid and assist people:

- We joined the ministers of other denominations and had a prayer vigil in the area where the tornado hit, lead by a dynamic duo of Rev. Beverly Stith and Rev. Sheila Scott.
- Rev. Beverly Stith, Rev. Aline Wilson, and Rev. Michael Scott partnered with West Side Baptist Church to pray for the people in the food distribution lines in cars, as well as on foot.
- St. John, St. Paul, and St. James, just to name a few, used their churches as headquarters to distribute food, toiletries and cleaning supplies. We went door to door to hand out supplies and prayers.
- The AME churches gave out book bags, snacks and supplies.
- St. Paul continues to have Family Fridays, giving out food baskets and providing entertainment for adults and children.
- Ward Chapel opens their food bank on every other Tuesday, and gives out staples as well as fresh vegetables from their garden.
- Most of our churches are participating in *Grill to Glory* on Saturdays. We are not just serving up hot dogs and chips, we are serving up some Jesus, the Word, and some hope!

As a Plan of Action going forward, we recommend that all the churches in the Missouri Conference would:

1. Establish foodbanks, shelter, housing, as you are able to provide,
2. Make use of the resources in your churches, such as computers and areas where someone can take care of hygiene needs, and
3. Motivate all parishioners to participate in the Ministry of Stewardship using their time, talents, gifts, treasures, and the Gospel as God has blessed them.

We got the message to “Rise Up”! Matthew 25:40 states: *And the king said, “Truly I tell you that whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters you did unto me”.*

Respectfully submitted:

Pastors: Rev. Aline Wilson, Rev. Dr. Spencer Lamar Booker, Rev. Donna Sims

Delegates: Sister Cheryl Blanks (Bethel Sikeston), Sister Deborah Cooper (Rock Chapel)

Consultant: Presiding Elder (Ret.) C. Jesse L. Strong

Christian Education

To: Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Presiding Prelate, 5th Episcopal District; Rev. Miriam Burnett, MD, MPH, Supervisor of Missions, 5th Episcopal District; and members of the Missouri Annual Conference, this is the report from the committee on Christian Education.

The 2024 Discipline defines Christian Education as the ministry of the church responsible for teaching, training, discipling, and forming people in the likeness of Christ. In addition, the ministry of Christian Education instructs and introduces people into the life and mission of the church. The Department shall develop a comprehensive and unified program of Christian Education which shall lead to a knowledge of the Holy Scripture, the Christian Religion and the Christian Church and an implementation of these values in daily living.

The Ministries of the Department of Christian Education are the following:

Richard Allen Young Adult Council (RAYAC)

Music & Christian Arts Ministry (MCAM)

Fellowship of Christian Educators / Sunday School

Association of AME Scouts (AAMES)

Writer's Guild

Son of Allen

Christian Debutante – Master Commission

The Committee on Christian Education of the Missouri Annual Conference, along with the Sunday School Superintendents and Directors of Christian Education, met and decided to concentrate on these four areas: Sunday School, RAYAC, Sons of Allen, and the Boy & Girl Scouts. Each church was asked: What activities have you initiated to increase membership and awareness of your organizations?

Several of our churches reported, and here is a summary of their reports. **(Sunday School)** – One church began having Sunday School every other Sunday and reports that they have at least 12 members in attendance. They serve breakfast at Church Sunday School and fellowship before Church School. **(Sons of Allen)** – (1) Several of our churches use either the 2nd or 3rd Sunday as Sons of Allen Sunday. The Sons of Allen lead the morning worship service. (2) Sons of Allen assist in projects both in and outside the local church. One group assisted with the National Day of Service on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, gathering canned goods, school supplies, toiletries, and clothing and donating them to local social agencies. **(RAYAC)** – (1) The Missouri Annual Conference RAYAC participated in the 5th District Call to the Altar during August. (2) Sponsored an evening of Bowling, so that RAYAC members of the various churches could meet and fellowship with each other. **(Boys & Girls Scouts)** – one church has had an ongoing Scout Troop for over 80 years and participates in Scout activities on the local and connectional levels.

Organizations are actively recruiting people to join and attend Sunday School, RAYAC, and Sons of Allen, and encouraging their children to join the Boy & Girl Scouts.

Submitted By:

Committee on Christian Education

Rev. Janice Parker

Rev. Howard Abernathy

Sis. Audrey Chambers

Sis. Nixetta Williams

Sis. Cynthia Jowers

Bro. Sean Braxton

CLERGY FAMILY ORGANIZATION REPORT
172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference
Conference Year 2025–2026



To: The Right Rev. Francine A. Brookins, Esq. ~ Presiding Bishop
Rev. Miriam J. Burnett, MD, MPH ~ Episcopal Supervisor
Lady Ashley Richards, 5th District CFO President
Rev. Edmund E. Lowe, Sr., Presiding Elder ~ Gateway District
Rev. Beverly Stith ~ Host Pastor
St. John A.M.E. Church ~ Host Church
Delegates and Members of the Missouri Annual Conference

Thursday, September 24, 2026

The Clergy Family Organization began the conference year with our first meeting on November 4, 2025. During this meeting, we discussed plans for fellowship and meaningful family gatherings throughout the year.

On December 12, 2025, the Clergy Family Organization joined the Ministerial Alliance for a holiday celebration. It was a joyful time of fellowship, laughter, and connection as we celebrated the season together.

We welcomed the new year on February 2, 2026, with prayer and a breathing meditation. This gathering provided an opportunity for us to pause, reflect, and begin the year centered in faith, peace, and purpose.

Our summer family gathering was postponed due to inclement weather and an excessive heat advisory. Although we were unable to gather as planned, the health and safety of our clergy families remained our priority.

To conclude our conference year, on August 8, 2026, the Clergy Family Organization was honored to present one of our 2026 high school graduates, David Parker Jr., with a \$200 stipend. David is continuing his educational journey at Maryville University. We celebrate his accomplishment and pray for God's continued guidance and success as he begins this new chapter.

This concludes the annual report of the Clergy Family Organization for the 2025–2026 conference year.

Respectfully submitted,
Evangelist Nedra McPherson, President
Clergy Family Organization Missouri Conference

172nd Session of The Missouri Annual Conference 2026 Evangelism Literary Report

To:

The Right Rev. Francine A. Brookins, Presiding Bishop

Rev. Miriam J. Burnett, MD, MPH, Episcopal Supervisor

Rev. Edmund E. Lowe, Host Presiding Elder ~ The Gateway District

Rev. Beverly Stith ~ Host Pastor

Saint John AME Church ~ Host Church

Delegates and Members of the Missouri Annual Conference

Foundational Alignment with AME Doctrine & Discipline (2024)

The 2024 Discipline affirms:

- The **mission of the AME Church** to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- The **responsibility of the local church** to engage in evangelism, nurture, and community ministry.
- The **connectional nature** of AME ministry, requiring collaboration across districts and congregations.
- The call to **serve humanity**, pursue justice, and embody compassionate outreach.

These principles form the backbone of the evangelism recommendations below.

Purpose of This Section

This evangelism strategy integrates publicly verifiable data from reputable research institutions and state agencies. All statistics are independently accessible and suitable for Annual Conference reporting, episcopal review, and Journal publication. Sources include Barna Group's *Four Trends Shaping Ministry Strategy in 2026*, Pew Research Center's *Religious Landscape Study: Missouri*, the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services (DHSS), and the Missouri Census Data Center.

1

Scripture: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” — Matthew 28:19

Evangelism

Pastors: Rev. Sheila Scott, Rev. Keith Cornelius, Rev. Dinah Tatman, Rev. James Boler, Rev. Charley Johnson, Rev. Dr. JoAnn Owens, Rev. Kenton Saunders

Delegates: Nannie Harmon (Rock Chapel, St. Louis)

I. National Ministry Trends (Barna Group, 2026)

Barna's 2026 ministry trends highlight several shifts shaping evangelism and congregational engagement nationwide. Churches that blend in-person and digital ministry report higher engagement and stronger retention, demonstrating that hybrid ministry has become a standard expectation for modern congregations. This trend underscores the importance of digital accessibility as a core component of evangelistic reach.

Barna also notes that community presence remains a primary driver of church growth. Congregations with consistent partnerships in local neighborhoods experience significant increases in first-time visitors. This finding reinforces the AME Church's historic commitment to social witness and community engagement.

Younger generations-particularly Gen Z and Millennials-continue to seek purpose, belonging, and authentic connection. Barna's research shows that mentorship, service opportunities, and storytelling resonate strongly with these groups. As spiritual curiosity rises among unchurched adults, churches have a renewed opportunity to engage seekers through relational evangelism and meaningful dialogue.

II. Missouri Religious Engagement Snapshot (Pew Research Center)

Pew Research Center's Religious Landscape Study provides the most authoritative statewide profile of Missouri's religious identity. According to Pew, 62% of Missouri adults identify as Christian, with 31% identifying as Evangelical Protestant and 10% as Mainline Protestant. Additionally, 29% of Missouri adults are religiously unaffiliated, reflecting a growing segment of residents who may be open to spiritual exploration but disconnected from traditional religious institutions.

Among Missouri adults who attend religious services weekly, 97% identify as Christian, and 55% identify as Evangelical Protestant. These figures confirm Missouri as a high-

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Evangelism

Pastors: Rev. Sheila Scott, Rev. Keith Cornelius, Rev. Dinah Tatman, Rev. James Boler, Rev. Charley Johnson, Rev. Dr. JoAnn Owens, Rev. Kenton Saunders

Delegates: Nannie Harmon (Rock Chapel, St. Louis)

Christian-identity state with a strong worship-attending population, while also highlighting the need for intentional outreach to the unaffiliated and spiritually curious.

III. Missouri Community Needs (Public Data Sources)

Public data from the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services (DHSS) identifies several statewide needs relevant to evangelism. Food insecurity remains a top concern across multiple counties, and mental health support-especially for youth-continues to be a growing need. These indicators align with national ministry trends and reinforce the importance of community-driven outreach.

The Missouri Census Data Center reports demographic shifts that directly affect evangelism strategy. Youth populations are becoming increasingly diverse, household compositions are changing, and communities continue to express a need for mentorship and engagement. These trends highlight opportunities for churches to strengthen their presence among families, young adults, and emerging leaders.

IV. Strategic Evangelism Recommendations

A data-informed evangelism strategy for the Missouri Annual Conference should integrate community needs, statewide religious trends, and national ministry insights.

Community-Driven Evangelism

Churches should prioritize outreach that addresses food insecurity and mental health needs. Partnering with local agencies to host community listening sessions will help congregations design initiatives that respond directly to community-identified concerns.

Scripture: *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”* — Matthew 28:19

Evangelism

Pastors: Rev. Sheila Scott, Rev. Keith Cornelius, Rev. Dinah Tatman, Rev. James Boler, Rev. Charley Johnson, Rev. Dr. JoAnn Owens, Rev. Kenton Saunders

Delegates: Nannie Harmon (Rock Chapel, St. Louis)

Digital Evangelism Expansion

Digital ministry is essential for reaching new audiences. Strengthening livestream consistency, producing short-form evangelism content, and equipping congregations with digital outreach tools will expand the Conference's digital footprint.

Testimony-Based Outreach

Story-centered evangelism remains one of the most effective ways to connect with seekers. Training congregations in testimony sharing and integrating personal stories into worship and digital content will deepen relational engagement.

Youth & Young Adult Evangelism

Launching Youth Evangelism Cohorts, partnering with colleges and community centers, and expanding mentorship programs will help address belonging, purpose, and mental health needs among younger generations.

Evangelism Through Service

Service-centered outreach continues to be a powerful evangelistic tool. Integrating prayer stations into service events, tracking follow-up engagement through digital forms, and adopting a "Serve First, Invite Second" model will strengthen community trust and visibility.

Congregational Evangelism Readiness

Annual readiness assessments, coaching support, and cross-church collaboration will help congregations build sustainable evangelism practices.

V. 2026 Evangelism Goals for the Missouri Annual Conference Churches

4

Scripture: *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."* — Matthew 28:19

Evangelism

Pastors: Rev. Sheila Scott, Rev. Keith Cornelius, Rev. Dinah Tatman, Rev. James Boler, Rev. Charley Johnson, Rev. Dr. JoAnn Owens, Rev. Kenton Saunders

Delegates: Nannie Harmon (Rock Chapel, St. Louis)

- Increase first-time visitor engagement
- Expand digital evangelism reach
- Launch community-based evangelism initiatives
- Train members in testimony-based evangelism
- Establish Youth Evangelism Peer-to-Peer

Conclusion and Recommendations

This evangelism strategy is grounded in publicly verifiable data, aligned with the mission of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and responsive to Missouri's real community needs. The Missouri Annual Conference can deepen its witness and expand its reach throughout 2026 by strengthening digital ministry, prioritizing community partnerships, elevating testimony-based outreach, and investing in youth engagement.

To support implementation, the Conference should:

- Provide congregations with digital evangelism toolkits.
- Expand partnerships with local agencies addressing food insecurity and mental health.
- Develop statewide training modules for Story Evangelism.
- Establish a Conference-wide mentorship network for youth and young adults.
- Create a shared dashboard for tracking evangelism outcomes.

By integrating credible research with actionable outreach, the Missouri Annual Conference is positioned to lead with clarity, compassion, and purpose in 2026.

Humbly Submitted,

Scripture: *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."* — Matthew 28:19

Evangelism

Pastors: Rev. Sheila Scott, Rev. Keith Cornelius, Rev. Dinah Tatman, Rev. James Boler, Rev. Charley Johnson, Rev. Dr. JoAnn Owens, Rev. Kenton Saunders

Delegates: Nannie Harmon (Rock Chapel, St. Louis)

The Committee

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The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 2024 Edition.

Copilot Assisted

Scripture: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” — Matthew 28:19

Evangelism

Pastors: Rev. Sheila Scott, Rev. Keith Cornelius, Rev. Dinah Tatman, Rev. James Boler, Rev. Charley Johnson, Rev. Dr. JoAnn Owens, Rev. Kenton Saunders

Delegates: Nannie Harmon (Rock Chapel, St. Louis)

**GATEWAY DISTRICT MISSOURI CONFERENCE HEALTH AND
WELLNESS MINISTRY
September 24, 2026**

To The Rt. Rev. Francine A. Brookins Esq, Bishop Fifth Episcopal District, Rev. Miriam J. Burnet, MD, MPH, Episcopal Supervisor of Missions, Host Pastor, Rev. Beverly Stith, Host First Gentleman Andre' Stith, Bro. Lamar Rose, Fifth Episcopal District Lay President, Rev. Dr. Spencer Lamar Booker, Chair BOE, Rev. Dr. Roger Richardson, Dean of Instructions BOE, Chair Sons of Allen, Rev. Anthony McPherson, Mo. Conference Ministerial Alliance President, Rev. Stephanie Allen, President MO. Conference RAYAC, Rev. Regina Lowe, Coordinator Conference WIM, Sister Chelsa Carter, MCWMS President, Sister Stephanie Alexander MCYPD Director, Sister Brenda Simpson, President MCLO, Lady Nedra McPherson, Clergy Family Organization President, Sister Pamela Williams Stewardess/ Deaconess Council President, Sister Audrey Chambers, MO. Conference Ushers President, Sister Patricia Searcy, AME Protocol

Matthew 4: 23-24

23-Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

24-News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.
Greetings Gateway District Missouri Conference

The Gateway District Health and Wellness Ministry meets every Quarter to discuss events of churches and communities. The following were are our events in 2025-2026:

1. Mental Health Summit May 30, 2026, at Ward Chapel AMEC, Dr. Kathy R. Coleman Presenter, Dr. Coleman, is a Licensed Professional Counselor, certified in trauma and grief therapy.

2. Obstructive Sleep Apnea June 14, 2026
3. Stroke and Brain Health Awareness
4. Assist with St. Peter AMEC Health Fair

Some of us had the American Cancer Society Ambassador Training. There will be Labs (workshops) coming soon, covering breast, colon, prostate, ovarian, stomach etc.

We recommend COVID testing, get the COVID and Flu vaccines. Also, we encourage parents and guardians to have their children vaccinated for measles.

We thank all of you for your support this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise S. Welch

Louise S. Welch, St. Paul/ St. Louis- Coordinator
Gateway District Missouri Conference

Committee:

Patricia Brown, St. Peter AMEC

Cheryl Fair, Wayman AMEC

Rosalyn Gilliam, St. James AMEC

Juanita Hoyte, St. James AMEC

Wanda Trotter, COR, AMEC

Charlotte Wade, St. James/Cape Girardeau

Gwendolyn Walker, St. James/St. Louis



Missouri Annual Conference Lay Organization
Sister Brenda Simpson President

Greetings to Bishop Francine Brookins, Esq and Supervisor Rev. Miriam Burnett, MD MPH,

I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit, apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5

For the 5th District Lay Convention our focus was intentional Worship in the presence of the Gateway District.

We started our journey by having the Vice Presidents take over activities expected of the Lay Organization; allowing the President to focus on the 69th Lay Convention.

Our Annual Prayer Breakfast under the chair of VP Jackie Payton maintained our goal of being more involved with our young people. Every part of the program was handled by a young person. For all it was their first time in front of a congregation. Jackie and her committee worked with the parents and YPD Directors to prepare them. The young people were fabulous! Their theme **A SEED IN THE SOIL was REALIZED on this day several seeds for the Lord sprouted vines. Our Vision** was realized. They presided, prayed, read scriptures, sang and blessed us with musical selection on a violin instrument. One of our AME entrepreneurs was also featured during the breakfast, she crochets clothing. The fashion show highlighted all of her amazing work, some in YPD colors of green/white and Lay blue. The young people were well received and left with proud smiles for their marvelous work.

Joanna Schooler 2nd VP, listened to the members when they expressed a desire to change the date because of winter weather considerations; and we had outgrown our present venue. Joanna and the committee had us step out of our comfort zone and set our sights on a larger, handicap accessible, better parking venue. Our **HOLY SMOKE** atmosphere was festive and full to capacity. More locals were able to participate and invite members outside of the Lay. The judges had a difficult time picking the winners because the themes and food were so diverse. Our goal of inclusion was realized!

This tone set the pace for us to continue preparing to host the **69th 5th District Lay Convention**. We stepped out of our comfort zones again and changed the hotel venue to a smaller, more accommodating meeting atmosphere. The design of the hotel opened our hallways up with sunshine all day. We incorporated Black owned vendors and our guests enjoyed the shopping convenience.

Our chairpersons were established early and their committees worked for 9 months to prepare to ensure all details were complete. Our Entrepreneur made crocheted blue & white LAY bookmarks for our Delegate kits. Continuing strengthening our VINES.

We invited the entire Gateway District to help us prepare to welcome and make the convention a worthwhile experience for all of our Delegates. The Missouri Conference Choir and Dancers didn't disappoint; they ministered with high praise.

Our Clergy put the icing on the cake with a moving Communion service to start out our Convention for our Opening Night Service.

The MACLO was able to choose the recipient of the LAOS Award from the 5th District and honor our commitment to stay in touch with the Community organization of young people that we showcased at our 2025 HEALING FOR THE ARTS. The band consists of all young people and they have added vocalists. They were honored to receive the award and attended our worship service too. We all enjoyed their gifts at our Welcome Reception.

Our own Sanatha Kendall Outreach was included in our venture to get out of the hotel into the community; with a tour of the May 16th 2025 Tornado effected areas. The Outreach had been collecting Diapers all year in order to deliver 1001 diapers to the Diaper community Warehouse. (see our article in the LAITY News letter).

The evaluation responses were very good and our Delegates appreciated and enjoyed their time with the MACLO in St. Louis MO.

The Gateway District has 23 churches and 19 Lay Organizations. With the use of Zoom we have good attendance from our rural churches for our meetings. This year our goal is to continue strengthening our relations with our Young People, our Lay Witness Night is a collaborative event. Our YPD asked to participate in the Worship service. We were delighted to work with them. We were proud that they wanted to be a apart as we continue to focus on Intentional Worship and training and preparing our Members to accept more responsibility as Officers.

Thank you for your support and devotion to the MACLO Lay Organization.
Brenda Simpson Proud President



Mental Health Ambassadors Ministry Report

Missouri Conference
Conference Year
2025-2026

Prepared By Rev. Regina L. Lowe, MHA Lead

Sep 24, 2...

Conference Report

To: Bishop Francie A. Brookins, Esq., Supervisor Miriam J. Burnett, MD, MPH, Presiding Elder Edmund E. Lowe, Sr.

This is the report for the Missouri Conference Mental Health Ambassadors. This was our first year in ministry! We are grateful for what God has done and what He has enabled us to accomplish this year.

We have Mental Health Ambassadors representing five (5) churches from across the Conference. They are:

Name	Church	Pastor
Rev. Regina L. Lowe	St. Paul, St. Louis	Rev. Dr. Spencer Lamar Booker
Elise House	St. Paul, St. Louis	Rev. Dr. Spencer Lamar Booker
Rev. Anthony McPherson	St. Paul, Columbia	
Glenda Ellis	St. Paul, Columbia	Rev. Anthony McPherson
Dalynne Holly	St. Paul, Columbia	Rev. Anthony McPherson

Rev. Dr. Garnita Pleas	St. Luke	Rev. Dr. Priscilla Dowden-White
Dr. Sharrilyn Rose	Christ Our Redeemer	Rev. Roger Richardson
JoAnna Schooler	St. John, St. Charles	Rev. Dr. Karla Frye

Activities & Collaborations

We are pleased to share our activities and collaborations for the 2025-2026 conference year.

Worship Package

In May, National Mental Health month, we launched a mental health awareness worship package. This package is designed to support churches who want to have a mental health focused worship. It provides various worship elements, guidelines for testimonies, and information for announcements and newsletters. This year, we used resources available to us. Our goal for the next conference year is to have this completely written by AME pastors, leaders, and members.

Use this QR code to access the worship package.



Resource Directory

In July, Minority Mental Health month, we launched an online resource directory. This directory includes all things applicable to support people with their wellbeing. It includes books, playlists, yoga studios, therapists (including those for black males and youth), videos, etc.

Use this QR code to access the directory:



Somatic Experience

Also in July, we collaborated with the Gateway District Church School Convention to provide an introduction to somatic experience workshop. Attendees learned basic somatic experiences they can do at any time to help manage stress, ground, and move. All activities helped us to understand how the mind-body connection is crucial for wellbeing.

Thank You

We thank God for all that He has done through this ministry. And we thank you, Bishop Brookins and Supervisor Burnett, for the opportunity to serve, and for entrusting me to lead this ministry.

We look forward to next conference year and where God will lead this ministry.

Humbly Submitted,

Rev. Regina L. Lowe

MOAC Mental Health Ambassador Conference Lead

172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference

Bishop Francine A. Brookins Esq. Presiding Prelate

COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS, CIRCUITS & STATIONS

TO: The 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference, Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq. Presiding Prelate

The Committee on Missions, Circuits & Stations submit the following report:

1) Definitions:

A Mission church is a small dependent local congregation or Church.

A Circuit Church is when two or more churches are under the supervision of a single pastor.

A Station is one church in which one Pastor has been assigned.

The Missouri Annual Conference is composed of twenty-eight churches of which there are no Missions or circuit churches.

2) The Twenty-Four stations of the Gateway District are presided over by The Reverend Edmund E. Lowe Sr., Presiding Elder. In the interest of time, the names of the twenty-four churches will not be read but are appended to this report in writing.

3) In consultation with The Presiding Elder Edmund E. Lowe Sr., there are twenty-Four 24 charges within the Gateway District, all 24 charges are station charges.

Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq. Presiding Prelate

COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS, & CIRCUITS & STATIONS

Active Stations in the **Gateway District:**

St. Paul AME, St. Louis, Mo.

St. Peter AME, St. Louis, Mo.

St. James AME, St. Louis, Mo.

Christ Our Redeemer AME, Black Jack, Mo.

St. John AME, St. Louis, Mo.

Ward Chapel AME, Florissant, Mo.

Wayman AME, St. Louis, Mo.

Tri-Union AME, St. Louis, Mo.

St. Luke AME, St. Louis, Mo.

Quinn Chapel AME, Jefferson City, Mo.

St. James AME, Cape Girardeau, Mo.

St. Paul AME, Columbia, Mo.

Rock Chapel AME, St. Louis, Mo.

Brown Chapel AME, Poplar Bluff, Mo.

Parks Chapel AME, Webster Groves, Mo.

Olive Chapel AME, Kirkwood, Mo.

St. John AME, St. Charles, Mo.

Perry Chapel AME, Charleston, Mo.

St. John AME, Kennett, Mo.

Buren Chapel AME, Herculaneum, Mo.

Grant AME, Wentzville, Mo.

Bethel AME, Paynesville, Mo.

Bethel AME, Louisiana, Mo.

Simpson Chapel AME, Columbia, Mo.

Mission Possible AME Church Metaverse

During the past year, Mission Possible Metaverse Church has continued to develop and expand its virtual ministry presence, with ongoing work to build out the metaverse site and prepare it for leadership review and evaluation. The project remains focused on exploring innovative ways to extend the ministry and mission of the African Methodist Episcopal Church into emerging digital spaces.

Two significant challenges remain before the project can move to its next phase. First, the cost and accessibility of virtual reality (VR) headsets are needed to provide participants with a more immersive worship experience. Second, are the development and refinement of an appropriate theological framework for establishing a church presence in the metaverse, particularly within “The Meadows,” the virtual environment being developed for this ministry.

Mission Possible remains committed to addressing these challenges and positioning the project for leadership evaluation as we continue to discern how the Church can faithfully carry its mission into new and emerging environments.

Rev. Dr. Roger A. Richardson,

Pastor, Mission Possible AME Church Metaverse

Pastor, Christ Our Redeemer AME Church

This concludes the report of the committee.

Respectively submitted,

The Reverends Keith D. Cornelius, Rev. David Parker, Rev. Zelldrick Preston, Consultant, Rev. Carolyn Kent, Rev. Jasmine Thompson, Rev. Kimberley Woodruff. **Delegates: Sis Carol Carrol (St. Paul, St. Louis), Bro. Billie Kibbee (Olive Chapel, Kirkwood, Mo.)**

Sen. Robin Wright-Jones (Ret.)

2841 Eads Avenue

St. Louis, MO 63104

314-458-6729

wjs4mo@gmail.com

MEMORANDUM

TO: Elder Edmund Lowe
FROM: Sen. Robin Wright-Jones (Ret.)
Chair, Public Relations Committee
DATE: September 10, 2026
RE: Missouri Annual Conference 2026 Report

NARRATIVE

Church public relations is defined as the intentional practice of building transparent, positive, and lasting relationships between a faith community and the public, both inside and outside its walls. It matters because it builds trust, manages crises, and shares the mission. Open communication fosters credibility and a solid reputation for integrity in the local neighborhood and the community at large. It helps leaders respond quickly, honestly, and safely during emergencies and unexpected public events. Consistent messaging promotes regular ministry activities, volunteer efforts, and community outreach.

CHURCH ACTION STRATEGIES

Positive Outreach: Sharing press releases, event flyers, and updates through newsletters and an active social media presence.

Internal and External Balance: Keeping conference members informed with transparent connectional updates. Strengthen visitor welcome and service to the public in general.

Designated Spokespersons: Appoint trained leadership to handle messaging, ensuring that information remains accurate and unified.

Conference Communication: Develop a process to report pertinent information with Pastors and Elders timely.



2025-2026 Conference Report



Prepared by: Rev. Regina L. Lowe, Coordinator

Executive Board

- Rev. Ramona Bailey - Secretary
- Rev. Kimberly Woodruff - Corresponding Secretary
- Rev. Tawana Rickmon - Interim Treasurer
- Rev. Geneva Allen-Patterson - Worship Leader
- Rev. Tennille Sanford - Herstoryographer

Activities

Monthly Prayer Worship Experiences

From January to September our worship leader, Rev. Geneva Allen-Patterson organized a monthly prayer worship experience. These were mini-worship experiences with a focus on prayer. Each month, we had a dynamic woman in ministry provide a short meditation using the Connectional 31-Day Devotional. Additionally, we had persons to offer corporate prayer and to sing.

Annual Rev. Jarena Lee Awards Brunch

In February, we held our annual Rev. Jarena Lee Awards Brunch where we honored three women in ministry. We recognized an AME WIM, an un-ordained AME woman in ministry, and a non-AME woman in ministry. Presiding Elder Darlene Singer-Smith

blessed us with a *Legacy Builder* presentation which had a response from Rev. Tawana Rickmon as *Legacy Receiver*.

The awardees were:

Award	Award Description	Awardee
Rev. Jarena Lee	An ordained Woman in Ministry in the Missouri Conference who practices leadership with a willingness to serve within and outside of the conference to minister to those in need. This recipient has gone above and beyond not only in their church ministry but their community ministry to address issues of the marginalized.	Rev. Gabrielle NS Kennedy
Dora Milaje	A non-ordained Woman in Ministry in the AME church, Missouri Conference, who has exercised her ministry in such a way that its impact has been felt across the conference and in the community.	Joyce Hoki Russell
Iron Sharpens Iron	A non-AME lay or clergy Woman in Ministry who is having an impact on her community of faith and the surrounding community through leadership and service.	Rev. Dr. Elizabeth R. Smith (who also attended WIM Quadrennial)

Connectional & District Prayer Calls

We were blessed to participate in the following connectional and district prayer calls:

1. 5th Episcopal District Prayer Call as a part of the Missouri Annual Conference in February
2. Connectional WIM Holy Saturday 24-Hour Prayer Vigil in April

3. 5th Episcopal District Prayer Call as a part of the 5th Episcopal District WIM in July

Attendance at WIM Quadrennial

The Missouri Conference was represented by seven (7) AME WIM who attended the WIM Quadrennial, and one (1) ordained woman in ministry from a different denomination. All of us were first time attendees and the experience was truly phenomenal for all of us!

Annual Revival

In August, we held our annual revival and anointing service and the Holy Spirit was truly present. During the anointing service, we anoint and provide anointing oil for attendees to take with them.

Because this is a revival for WIM, our goal is to have a preacher from outside of the AME denomination. We were blessed this year to have Rev. Jennifer Strayhorn as our revivalist. Rev. Strayhorn is the Minister of Education at Westside Missionary Baptist Church.

In-reach to Support a WIM

As WIM we want to ensure we are supporting our sisters and their ministries. This year, we supported Rev. Geneva Allen-Patterson and St. James in Cape Girardeau, MO. We were able to provide 100 hygiene kits for the unhoused. This undergirded the People's Shelter ministry they have to support that population.

Relationship Building with Women's Missionary Society

Because WIM work hard, we also want to provide an opportunity for rest and relaxation. This year, Rev. Dr. Garnita Pleas, organized a joint effort with the Women's Missionary Society. This Sit & Sip was filled with fellowship, laughter, and meaningful conversations.

Newsletter

Finally, our secretary, Rev. Ramona Bailey, initiated a dynamic newsletter which kept us informed and highlighted various WIM and their ministries.

WIM in Leadership

We are pleased to highlight these WIM who are in specific leadership positions this conference year:

- Rev. Dr. Priscilla Dowden-White - 5th District WIM Herstoryographer
- Rev. Chelsie Carter - MOAC WMS President
- Rev. Regina L. Lowe - MOAC WIM Coordinator, MOAC MHA Lead
- Rev. Dr. Garnita Pleas - MOAC We Grow Together WIM Lead
- Rev. Sheila Scott - MOAC PART Lead
- Rev. Geneva Allen-Patterson - Cape Girardeau Committeewoman, Ward 1
- Rev. Ramona Bailey - Cape Girardeau Committeewoman, Ward 2

New & Expanded Ministries

WIM has been active in serving God in and outside of the church. This year, we are highlighting the following new and expanded ministries.

Name	Ministry	About
Evangelist Stephanie Hickman	The House of Manna	Botanical, creative, and reflective experiences designed to help you reconnect, release, and come back to you.
Rev. Regina L. Lowe	Guided Life and Leadership Institute (Psalm 32:8, NLT)	Guiding people to God for their best lives and for better leadership. Biblically-based spiritual and leadership development.
Evangelist Nedra McPherson	Butterfly Beginnings	Patient navigation, holistic health, holistic wellness.

Rev. Dr. Garnita Pleas	Rev. Dr. Garnita Pleas Ministries	Women's empowerment products, services, and events.
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Humbly Submitted,

Rev. Regina L. Lowe

Rev. Regina L. Lowe, MOAC WIM Coordinator

Church School Is Still a Spiritual Necessity

Last year I spoke with you about church school being a spiritual necessity, I would suggest to you that with all that is going on these days that the necessity of maintaining a form of spiritual education from within the church and spiritual mentoring to those we encounter outside of the church is still very much a necessity.

The book of Hosea gives us a bit of insight regarding the importance of spiritual education and mentoring.

Hosea 4:6

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because they have rejected knowledge,....

Church School, or what we used to call Sunday School, is now and has been a long-standing staple and tradition in the black church and especially in the A.M.E. Church. The idea was and is to provide a Biblical and spiritual foundation to undergird the parishioners from the cradle to the grave. As it states in the book of Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way that he should go, so that when he is old, he shall not part from it.

In these days and times in which church attendance is in decline, it is important that there is the opportunity to do more than just hear a sermon on Sunday morning, but to also to receive regular and detailed instruction in order to learn how to have a positive relationship with other people as well as to have a strong relationship with God. These lessons are taught through the scriptures, the Bible stories as well as sharing ideas, concepts and even some contrasts with others. The suggestion is that in order to have a strong spiritual foundation, like anything else that is worthwhile one has to put in the work. Church school, or Sunday school exists so that one has a place to put in that foundational work.

In the times that we are living there is a concept that salvation can be had if one just merely says the sinner's prayer, claims saving grace in Jesus Christ, and accepts Jesus as one's personal lord and savior. All of this is fine but comes up short if no one is doing those things that Jesus asked of us. If you cannot love your neighbor as yourself, if you cannot welcome the stranger, feed the hungry, cloth the naked, etc. one is engaging in lazy Christianity or what Dietrich Bonhoeffer would call "Cheap Grace."

As we are living in a time where there seems to be unprecedented hatred and corruption, we cannot afford to engage in Lazy Christianity or Cheap Grace. The importance of developing a strong spiritual foundation for the days ahead cannot be

understated. As this is the case, we simply must continue to offer the opportunity to have the church school for all of our disciples from children to adults, in order to strengthen our spiritual foundations.

In maintaining our church schools, it is also important that we make use not only of church schools in the church building but to also make use of church school using the advantages of modern technology such as classes taught on the Zoom platform locally as well as all across the country and beyond whenever possible. We made use of this technology to keep us connected during the pandemic, let's continue to make use of this technology to keep us connected, informed, and guided spiritually now. Our church school is too important to let it slip away.

Prayerfully Submitted.

Rev. Howard Abernthy
Parks Chapel A.M.E. Church

Missouri Conference

Chelsie Carter, Conference WMS President
Stephanie Alexander, Conference YPD Director
Amyriah Boyd, YPD President

Conference Theme:

Rise Up and Sing
Psalms 96:1

Sub-theme:

Faith, Communication, and Collaboration
Hebrews 10:25

Executive Board meetings

November 15, 2025
January 17, 2026
March 26, 2026
April 20, 2026
May 28, 2026 (in person)
June 30, 2026
August 18, 2026

Mission Outreach – Elevating the essence of missions

During this conference year, MOC local societies continually supported their communities and several organizations through donations, volunteer service, referrals, and shared resources. women, seniors, students, families, and children. Activities included MLK Day service projects, Purple Sunday for Alzheimer's Month, Madd initiatives, Support for Tornado victims, spiritual uplift, visits, prayers, and cards for the sick and shut-in.

Sustainable Goals

1 No Poverty

Supporting women, families, and children with benevolent funds for utility and housing assistance.

2 Zero Hunger

Food pantry support, food distribution, holiday food baskets, Blessing Bags, food and grocery store gift cards, gardening projects.

3 Good Health and Well Being

Support for seniors, mental health workshops, nutrition education, self-care resources, blood pressure screenings, weekly health tips, and focus on fellowship

4 Quality Education

Book drives (Collected 1000+ books), church libraries, back to school supplies, Be Smart for Kids initiative

Partnerships for the Goals

Church Women United, SNAP, Southeast Missouri State University Men's and Women's Track Team, Mom's Demand Action for Gun Sense in America and Everytown for Gun Safety, Community Partnership Semo, Urban League, MC Women in Ministry, St. Louis Public Schools

Special Activities

- Annual Jewel Luncheon featuring the Magnificent Men of the Missouri Conference
- Annual Christmas Vesper Worship Service
- Shrove Tuesday Worship Service
- Led 5th District Prayer Call
- Delivered 250+ Hygiene kits to St. Louis Public Schools in collaboration with MCWIM
- Awarded three scholarships through the Dykes-Fredricks Scholarship program
- "I'm With the Banned" Legacy Library book collections and restocking of existing church libraries. Raising awareness and supporting literacy in the community.
- Expansion of church gardens support through the Grow together initiative. Supporting YPD and seniors to start and sustain gardens at their respective churches.
- Traveled to Jefferson City and Wentzville in addition to speaking with pastors regarding establishing/activating societies in St Charles and Jefferson City. As a result a society has been established at Quinn Chapel Jefferson City. A new recruitment brochure has also been created. This will promote WMS through ongoing communication.

Connecting with the YPD

Fundraising and donations helped send MC YPD members to Connectional LTI in Alabama.

Financial accountability

- The Missouri Conference's Fair Share is expected to be paid in full by the deadline of 10 days before annual conference

172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference
September 24-26, 2026
St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church, St. Louis, Host Church

CLASSIFICATION OF PASTORS

To: Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq., Supervisor Miriam J. Burnett, Presiding Elder Edmund E. Lowe, Sr., and the members of the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference. The following is the report on the Classification of Ministers, as outlined on pages 152-153 of the 2021 Doctrine & Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

CLASS A: Full-time, having traveled eight (8) consecutive years; and any ordained elder holding a degree from a college or seminary, and shall have traveled at least one year as a full-time pastor. Full-time pastors are itinerant elders who wholly and solely give their time and talents to pastoral duties without any other work, professional or common, that interferes with or prevents the performance of the regular ministerial duties of a pastor as negotiated between the pastor and the Board of Stewards.

Class A Pastors

Reverend Howard Abernathy	Reverend Charles Norris
Reverend Barbara Blunt	Reverend Dr. Roger Richardson
Reverend Dr. Spencer L. Booker	Reverend Sheilah Scott
Reverend Keith Cornelius	Reverend Beverly M. Stith
Reverend Priscilla A. Dowden-White, PhD	
Reverend Lee C. Goodman, Esq.	
Reverend Dr. Karla Frye	
Reverend Carolyn Kent	
Reverend Anthony McPherson	

Class B: Itinerant elders having traveled four consecutive years as Full-time pastors: **None**

Class C: Full-time pastors who are itinerant elders in the AME Church: **None**

Class D: Full-time pastors who have not been ordained as itinerant elders

Reverend Lori Beason	Reverend Earl Strauther
Reverend William Harold	Reverend Dinah Tatman

Reverend Dr. David Parker, Sr. Reverend Kenton Saunders	Reverend Geneva Allen-Patterson
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Class E: Part-time pastors

Reverend Kimberly Woodruff

Humbly Submitted by the Committee on Classification of Pastors

Reverend Priscilla Dowden-White, PhD (Chair)

Reverend Barbara Blunt

Reverend Kenton Sanders

Reverend Earl Strauther

Delegates: Barbara Freeman (Tri-Union)

Ricky Clark (St. Paul – St. Louis)



**172ND SESSION OF THE MISSOURI ANNUAL CONFERENCE
ST. PETER AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, HOST CHURCH**

CLASSIFICATION OF CHURCHES/ CLASSIFICATION OF PASTORS

2026



CLASSIFICATION OF CHURCHES

**TO: BISHOP FRANCINE A. BROOKINS, ESQ., PRESIDING PRELATE
5TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT AND**

REV. EDMUND E. LOWE, SR., PRESIDING ELDER, GATEWAY DISTRICT

CLASSIFICATION OF CHURCHES

Per the 2024 Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, pg. 153, churches are classified in the following manner:

(These classifications are applicable only when the application is made to the Salary Supplement Department for support pursuant to the rules of that Department.)

CLASS A: Charges requiring full-time pastoral services and providing salaries of \$20,000 or more annually.

CLASS B: Charges requiring full-time pastoral services. Salaries shall be negotiated.

CLASS C: Charges requiring full-time pastoral services and providing salaries from \$1,000 to \$2,400.

CLASS D: Charges requiring full-time pastoral services providing less than \$1,200.

CLASS E: Charges not requiring full-time pastoral service.

Note: Charges requiring full-time pastoral services shall be urged to provide a parsonage (or living quarters) for the pastor where the church is located. The bishop and Annual Conference shall require the observance of this provision wherever and whenever possible.

MISSOURI CONFERENCE 2026
THEREFORE, THE FOLLOWING CLASSIFICATIONS WERE MADE, WITH GUIDANCE FROM THE DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE AND
INFORMATION PROVIDED BY PARTICIPATING PASTORS.
(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER):

Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E
Christ Our Redeemer	Buren Chapel	Bethel- Paynesville	None	Bethel- Sikeston
Quinn Chapel- Jeff City	Grant Chapel			Quinn Chapel- STL
St. James- Cape	Parks Chapel			Simpson Chapel
St. James- STL	Perry Chapel			
St. John- STL	Rock Chapel			
St. Luke	St. John-Kennett			
St. Paul- Columbia	St. John- St. Charles			
St. Paul- STL	Brown Chapel			
St. Peter				
Ward Chapel				
Wayman				
Tri-Union				

HUMBLY SUBMITTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON CLASSIFICATION OF CHURCHES

Reverend Priscilla Dowden-White, PhD (Chair)

Reverend Anthony McPherson

Reverend Dinah Tatman

Reverend Edith Reed

**Delegates: Dr. Tamara Buck (Perry Chapel, Charleston) and Juanita Washington
(St. Paul, Columbia)**

CLASSIFICATION OF MINISTERS

To: Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Supervisor Miriam J. Burnett, Presiding Elder Edmund E. Lowe, Sr., and the members of the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference. The following is the report on the Classification of Ministers, as outlined on pages 152-153 of the 2021 Doctrine & Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

CLASS A: Full-time, having traveled eight (8) consecutive years; and any ordained elder holding a degree from a college or seminary, and shall have traveled at least one year as a full-time pastor. Full-time pastors are itinerant elders who wholly and solely give their time and talents to pastoral duties without any other work, professional or common, that interferes with or prevents the performance of the regular ministerial duties of a pastor as negotiated between the pastor and the Board of Stewards.

CLASSIFICATION OF PASTORS

Class A Pastors

Reverend Howard Abernathy

Reverend Charles Norris

Reverend Barbara Blunt

Reverend Dr. Roger Richardson

Reverend Dr. Spencer L. Booker

Reverend Sheila Scott

Reverend Keith Cornelius

Reverend Beverly M. Stith

Reverend Priscilla A. Dowden-White, PhD

Reverend Lee C. Goodman, Esq.

Reverend Dr. Karla Frye

Reverend Carolyn Kent

Reverend Anthony McPherson

**CLASS B: ITINERANT ELDERS HAVING TRAVELED FOUR CONSECUTIVE YEARS
AS FULL-TIME PASTORS: NONE**

**CLASS C: FULL-TIME PASTORS WHO ARE ITINERANT ELDERS IN THE AME
CHURCH: NONE**

CLASS D: FULL-TIME PASTORS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ORDAINED AS ITINERANT ELDERS

Class D Pastors

Reverend Lori Beason

Reverend William Harold

Reverend Dr. David Parker, Sr.

Reverend Kenton Saunders

Reverend Earl Strauther

Reverend Dinah Tatman

Reverend Geneva Allen-Patterson

CLASS E: **PART-TIME MINISTERS**

Class E Pastors

Reverend Kimberly Woodruff



HUMBLY SUBMITTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON CLASSIFICATION OF PASTORS

Reverend Priscilla Dowden-White, PhD

Reverend Barbara Blunt

Reverend Kenton Saunders

Reverend Earl Strauther

Delegates: Barbara Freeman [Tri-Union]

Ricky Clark [St. Paul – St. Louis]

MAKING THE MISSION POSSIBLE

Missouri Annual Conference Trustees Report

172nd Meeting of the Missouri Annual Conference

Presented to Bishop Francine Brookins

Rev. Charles Norris, Vice Chair

Conference Year 2025–2026



Our charge: faithful stewardship that strengthens mission

The Trustees protect the Conference’s property interests while helping congregations use buildings and land for ministry, community service, and long-term stability.

STEWARDSHIP

Maintain accurate records, insurance, and responsible oversight.

MISSION

Help congregations align property decisions with ministry purpose.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Protect sale proceeds, approvals, and obligations through clear controls.

Conference-year emphasis **Build the systems, complete the transactions, and preserve the places that make ministry possible.**

Conference Trustees

VICE CHAIR

Rev. Charles Norris

SECRETARY

Hon. Senator Robin Wright Jones

TREASURER

Rev. Keith Cornelius

Advisors

Retired Presiding Elder Darlene Smith

Presiding Elder Edmund E. Lowe Sr

MEMBERS

Rev. Dr. Spencer Booker — St. Paul

Rev. Lee Clayton Goodman, Esq. — Wayman

Rev. Sheila Scott — Ward Chapel

Florette Hampton — Tri-Union

Rev. David Parker — Tri-Union

Rev. Earl Strauther — Rock Chapel

Rev. Dr. Roger Richardson — Christ Our Redeemer

Rev. Beverly Smith — St. John

Jean Kendall — St. John

Ryan Norris — St. Paul

James Searcy — St. Peters

We strengthened the board's financial foundation

BANK ACCOUNT

Established a dedicated account for Conference Trustee business.

TREASURER

Elected Rev. Keith Cornelius to provide financial leadership.

PROPERTY CONTROLS

Continued oversight of insurance, records, transactions, and project approvals.

What this enables

- Clear custody of trustee funds
- Documented authority for receipts and disbursements
- Better reporting to the Bishop and Annual Conference
- A stable foundation for property transactions

The inventory now brings 48 property records into one view



Inventory update approach

The 2024 master inventory remains the baseline. Current project status comes from 2026 trustee records and this annual report. Fields without current documentation remain marked for verification.

Priority after Annual Conference **Confirm every parcel, responsible congregation, insurance value, mortgage balance, and disposition authority.**

Five major assignments moved the mission forward

PARIS, MISSOURI

Preparing the property for sale after title and ownership verification.

TRI-UNION AME

Advising the sale process and responsible management of proceeds during the transition.

CHRIST OUR REDEEMER

Assisting the congregation as it prepares to break ground on a multipurpose facility.

OAKLEY CHAPEL

Supporting Retired Presiding Elder Smith's historic preservation project and cemetery care.

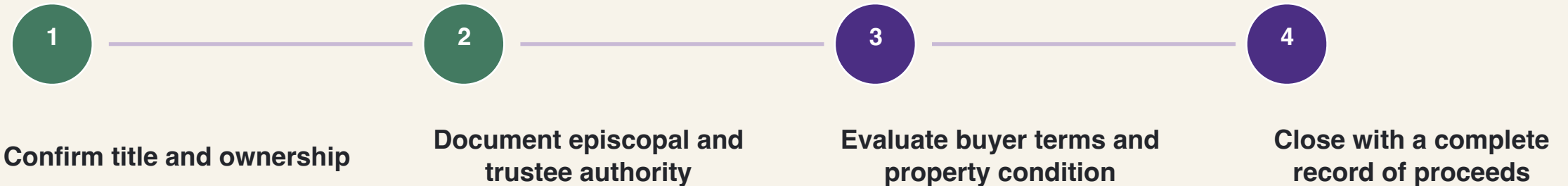
QUINN CHAPEL, ST. LOUIS

Presiding Elder Edmund Lowe Sr. leads this special project, including property assessment and future-use planning.

Paris property: disciplined preparation before disposition

Objective

Complete a lawful, documented sale that protects the Conference and avoids preventable demolition or carrying costs.



Current status: preparing to sell. Title verification remains the control point before final disposition.

Tri-Union: protect the congregation and the proceeds

TRANSACTION

Advise the proposed sale and ensure required approvals and documentation.

TRANSITION

Support continued worship through the agreed transition period and remain connected to the neighborhood.

FUNDS

Establish safeguards for proceeds so future property and ministry decisions remain transparent.

Trustee guidance

BEFORE CLOSING

Confirm property scope, title, environmental issues, zoning, and denominational approvals.

AT CLOSING

Document proceeds, authorized account, restrictions, signers, and reporting.

AFTER CLOSING

Monitor lease obligations and prepare a mission-centered plan for the congregation’s next location.

Christ Our Redeemer: from approval to groundbreaking

The Conference Trustees confirmed approval to proceed with planning, financing, contracting, construction, and completion, subject to civil, denominational, insurance, and episcopal requirements.

BOARD SUPPORT

Clarify approvals and keep the project record complete.

CHURCH RESPONSIBILITY

Christ Our Redeemer remains responsible for every project obligation and encumbrance.

NEXT MILESTONE

Complete pre-construction requirements and prepare for the multipurpose facility groundbreaking.

The project advances ministry without creating an unapproved financial obligation for the Conference Trustees.

Oakley Chapel: preservation is part of the mission

Oakley Chapel carries historic importance as a church. The work also includes care for the adjoining cemetery and the stories entrusted to the site.

STABILIZE

Complete contractor coordination and protect the structure from further loss.

CARE FOR THE SITE

Maintain the cemetery and grounds with safe, sustainable support.

BUILD SUPPORT

Develop fundraising materials and connect preservation partners to the project.

ASSIST ELDER SMITH

Continue trustee support for Retired Presiding Elder Darlene Smith’s special assignment.

Quinn Chapel, St. Louis: a special project

Presiding Elder Edmund Lowe Sr. leads the Conference Trustees’ work with Quinn Chapel in St. Louis.

ASSESS THE PROPERTY

Confirm title, condition, insurance, security, and immediate maintenance needs.

STABILIZE WHAT WE HOLD

Address urgent risks and preserve the property while decisions remain under review.

CLARIFY THE PATH FORWARD

Develop a documented recommendation for ministry use, partnership, preservation, or disposition.

Trustee lead

Presiding Elder Edmund Lowe Sr.

The project will remain on the active dashboard until the Trustees approve a documented course of action.

Current project dashboard

PROJECT	STATUS	NEXT ACTION
Conference operations	Completed this year	Maintain bank controls, reporting, and authorized signers
Paris property	Sale preparation	Confirm title and complete disposition process
Tri-Union AME	Transition planning	Advise transaction, temporary worship arrangement, and protected management of proceeds
Christ Our Redeemer	Pre-construction	Support groundbreaking readiness while preserving church responsibility for all obligations
Oakley Chapel	Historic preservation	Coordinate stabilization, contractor work, fundraising, and cemetery care
Quinn Chapel, St. Louis	Special project	Assess the property, address immediate stewardship needs, and recommend a mission-centered path forward
Rock Chapel	Monitoring	Continue court and lender monitoring
Olive Chapel	Preservation review	Clarify authority, security, corporate standing, and property condition
Ward, Mexico	Disposition planning	Maintain church and parsonage
Property archive	In progress	Digitize historic records and maintain one current master inventory

Next-year priorities

- 1 Complete the Paris disposition with verified title and full documentation.
- 2 Guide Tri-Union through transition, and protected management of proceeds.
- 3 Support Christ Our Redeemer's groundbreaking readiness and compliance record.
- 4 Advance Oakley Chapel stabilization, cemetery care, and preservation fundraising.
- 5 Support Presiding Elder Lowe's assessment and action plan for Quinn Chapel, St. Louis.
- 6 Finish the master inventory verification and establish a regular property-review cycle.

Timely records, prompt reporting of property changes, and cooperation with trustee review.
Requested support from the Annual Conference

MAKING THE MISSION POSSIBLE

**Faithful stewardship makes room for worship, witness, preservation,
and service.**

Respectfully submitted

**Rev. Charles Norris, Vice Chair
Hon. Senator Robin Wright Jones, Secretary
Rev. Keith Cornelius, Treasurer**

**THE REPORT of
THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
for the
172nd SESSION
of the
MISSOURI ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**



**The Right Reverend Francine A. Brookins, Esq.
Presiding Prelate**

**The Reverend Edmund E. Lowe, Sr.
Presiding Elder Gateway District**

**The Reverend Dr. Spencer Lamar Booker
Conference Chair**

**The Reverend Dr. Roger Richardson
Conference Dean**

Thursday, September 24, 2026

Missouri Conference BOARD OF EXAMINERS 2026

September 24, 2026

To Bishop Francine A. Brookins, Esq., Clergy and Lay Delegates to the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference:

The Board of Examiners of the Missouri Conference has labored conscientiously and extensively in training the candidates we are presenting to you. Through the caliber of training received, the Board of Examiners has attempted to identify and empower each candidate's spiritual and intellectual gifts. Thank you for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. We submit the following as our report on behalf of all the Board Members.

THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS & INSTRUCTORS

The Reverend Dr. Spencer Lamar Booker
Conference Chair

The Reverend Dr. Roger Richardson
Conference Dean

The Reverend Beverly M. Stith
Registrar

The Reverend Charles Norris
Class on Admissions & Coordinator of Ministry Readiness

The Reverend Dr. Karla E. Frye
1st Year Studies

The Reverend Dr. James Boler & The Reverend Sheila Scott
2nd Year Studies

The Reverend Anthony McPherson
3rd Year Studies

The Reverend Keith Cornelius & The Reverend M. Stith
4th Year Studies

The Reverend Beverly M. Stith – *Library Coordinator*

The Reverend Sheila Scott & The Reverend James Boler
Coordinators of Preaching Lab

Consultant
The Reverend Edmund E. Lowe, Sr.
Presiding Elder Gateway District

Class on Admissions

Austyns Stancil

Pursuing Itinerant Orders

Age: 36

Marital Status: Single

Children: Four (4) – Ages 2, 10, 11, 12

Church: St. Paul AME Church – Columbia
Rev. Anthony McPherson

Education: MBA in Business Management

Employment: General Manager for W.H. Smith

RECOMMENDATION: Having been evaluated by the District Conference Committee on Instruction, the Board of Examiners recommends that **Austyns Stancil** be ***ADMITTED on TRIAL*** and placed in **Class on Admissions** at the **172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference**.

Class on Admissions

James White

Pursuing Itinerant Orders

Age: 18

Marital Status: Single

Children: No Children

Church: St. John AME Church – Kennett
Rev. Dinah Tatman

Education: Junior – Maryville University

Employment: N/A

RECOMMENDATION: Having been evaluated by the District Conference Committee on Instruction, the Board of Examiners recommends that **James White** be ***ADMITTED on TRIAL*** and placed in **Class on Admissions at the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference.**



Class on First Year Studies

Evangelist Cheryl Shrader

Pursuing Local Orders

Age: 54

Marital Status: Single

Children: Vincent Johnson (A), Adam Johnson (A)

Church: Ward Chapel AME Church – Florissant
Pastor: Rev. Sheila Word-Scott

Education: Bachelor of Science – Accounting
University of Phoenix

Employment: Accountant – The Boeing Company

RECOMMENDATION: Having been evaluated by the District Conference Committee on Instruction, the Board of Examiners recommends that **Evangelist Cheryl Shrader be *passed on to Second Year Studies* at the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference.**



Class on Second Year Studies

Chelsie Carter

Pursuing Local Orders

Age: 57

Marital Status: Divorced

Children: No Children

Church: St. Peter AME Church

Pastor: Rev. Keith Cornelius

Education: Master of Business Administration

Lindenwood University

Employment: Director Operations CX

Central States Water Resources

RECOMMENDATION: Having been evaluated by the District Conference Committee on Instruction, the Board of Examiners recommends that **Chelsie Carter** be ***ELECTED and ORDAINED an ITINERANT DEACON*** and ***passed on to Class on Third Year Studies*** at the **172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference.**



Class on Third Year Studies

Janza Preston

Pursuing Local Orders

Age: 72

Marital Status: Single

Children: No Children

Church: St. Luke AME Church

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Priscilla Dowden-White

Education: BS, Business Administration, Missouri Baptist

University Masters Professional Counseling,

Lindenwood University

Clinical Pastoral Education- 1 Unit

Employment: Licensed Professional Counselor

Ellie Mental Health

RECOMMENDATION: Having been evaluated by the District Conference Committee on Instruction, the Board of Examiners recommends that **Janza Preston be passed on to Class on Fourth Year Studies at the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference.**



Class on Third Year Studies

Ramona Bailey

Pursuing Itinerant Orders

Age: 48 years

Marital Status: Separated

Children: Delante (17), Andrew (14), Peighton (A)

Church: St. James AME Church, Cape Girardeau, MO
Pastor: Rev. Geneva Allen-Patterson

Education: Southeast Missouri State University, Bachelor
of Arts, Theatre and Minor Music

Employment: The Free Church, Sikeston, MO

RECOMMENDATION: Having been evaluated by the District Conference Committee on Instruction, the Board of Examiners recommends that **Ramona Bailey be passed on to Class on Fourth Year Studies at the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference.**



Class on Third Year Studies

Reverend Dr. Quintin Redd

Pursuing Itinerant Orders

Age: 58

Marital Status: Married: Dr. Twyla Redd

Children: Quintin Redd II (A), Tyerenei Davenport (A), Quintara Redd (A), Qualin Redd (A), Tre'syn Veasley-Rainer (19)

Church: St. John AME Church – St. Louis
Pastor: Rev. Beverly M. Stith

Education: BS – Professional Interdisciplinary Studies
Harris Stowe State University
Masters – Management and Leadership
Fontbonne University
Midwest Theological University
Doctorate of Theology

Employment: Hospice Chaplain
Vitas Healthcare

RECOMMENDATION: Having been evaluated by the District Conference Committee on Instruction, the Board of Examiners recommends that **Reverend Dr. Quintin Redd** be _____ and passed on to **Class on Fourth Year Studies at the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference.**



Class on Third Year Studies

Reverend Kenton Saunders

Pursuing Itinerant Orders

Age: 48

Marital Status: Married: Vashaunda Saunders

Children: Justin Saunders (A), Jayden Saunders (19), Jayson Saunders (15), Shaila Hill (15), Jordan Saunders (15), Kenton Saunders III (2)

Church: St. Peter AME Church
Pastor: Rev. Keith Cornelius

Education: Ohio Christian University, Bachelor of Arts – Pastoral Care & Counseling
Pursuing a Masters in Pastoral Care & Counseling – Ohio Christian University

Employment: Director of Operations, Mercy Health

RECOMMENDATION: Having been evaluated by the District Conference Committee on Instruction, the Board of Examiners recommends that **Reverend Kenton Saunders be passed on to Class on Fourth Year Studies at the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference.**



Class on Fourth Year Studies

Reverend Dr. Garnita Pleas

Pursuing Local Orders

Marital Status: Divorced

Children: Alana (A), Alexis (A)

Church: St. Luke AME Church

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Priscilla Dowden-White

Education: BS, Elementary Education

MA Educational Process

MED Elementary & Secondary Counseling

EDD Christian Ministry

Grand Canyon University

Employment: Retired Educator

RECOMMENDATION: Having successfully completed the Class on Fourth Year Studies, the Board of Examiners recommends that **Reverend Dr. Garnita Pleas be *ELECTED and ORDAINED a LOCAL ELDER* at the 172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference.**



Class on Fourth Year Studies

Reverend Michael J. Scott

Pursuing Local Orders

Age: 70

Marital Status: Married: Rev. Sheila Scott

Children: Sarah (A), Michael (A), Andrew (A),
Willie (A), Alexis (A), Isaiah (A)

Church: Ward Chapel AME Church – Florissant
Pastor: Rev. Sheila Scott

Education: BA- Biology
University of Missouri St. Louis
Master of Community Leadership
Eden Theological Seminary

Employment: Retired from Washington University

RECOMMENDATION: Having
successfully completed the Class
on Fourth Year Studies, the Board
of Examiners recommends that
Reverend Michael J. Scott be
ELECTED and ORDAINED a LOCAL
ELDER at the 172nd Session of the
Missouri Annual Conference.

ADDENDUM: A
Sacred Office of Deaconess

The following Christian women have been presented to the Board of Examiners by their
Pastors and Quarterly Conference to be formerly recommended to this the
172nd Session of the Missouri Annual Conference for
Consecration for the Office of Deaconess

RECOMMENDATION:

Deborah Bowman-Lee

Christ Our Redeemer African Methodist Episcopal Church

Rev. Dr. Roger Richardson, Pastor

Jeanell Grandberry

St. Luke African Methodist Episcopal Church

Rev. Dr. Priscilla Dowden-White, Pastor

Shirley Hargrove

St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church – St. Louis

Rev. Beverly M. Stith, Pastor

ADDENDUM B

ORDINATIONS PENDING COMPLETION OF ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Ordination Pending</u>	<u>Church</u>
2003	Rev. Lori K. Beason	Itinerant Elder	Pastor, Quinn Chapel AMEC, St. Louis
2005	Rev. Rhoda Stuart	Itinerant Elder	On Leave
2014	Rev. Leslie Galbreath	Itinerant Elder	Quinn Chapel AMEC, Jefferson City
2018	Rev. Jasmine Thompson	Itinerant Elder	Tri-Union AMEC, St. Louis
2022	Rev. Dinah Tatman	Itinerant Elder	Pastor, St. John AMEC, Kennett

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Currently enrolled in ATS accredited seminary